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Res Mc Carthy, Agne
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Single-Shot Study of the CIA

Signs that the Central Intelligence Agency makes foreign policy without co-ordination with the State Department pop up frequently enough to be disturbing. One such was the department's embarrassing ignorance of a bribe offered to the prime minister of Singapore. Another is the charge, perhaps false, by President Sukarno of Indonesia that he was offered an American financial inducement.

Senator McCarthy of Minnesota has responded to these and other such signs with a proposal that the Senate establish a select committee to make a thorough study of the CIA and report by the end of January, 1967. Along with a few other members of Congress, Mr. McCarthy believes the hush-hush agency should subject to more supervision by Congress.

"The role of the CIA in Vietnam, Cuba, and a number of other critical areas," the senator said, "has raised serious questions about the relationship of the agency to the process of making and directing foreign policy."

This would be a clearly improper function of the intelligence organization, one that merits the attention, at least, of the Senate. Continual surveillance of the CIA has been opposed not unreasonably on grounds of security. A single-purpose inquiry would hardly involve the same degree of risk.